DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 403 462 CE 073 481

TITLE HRD Town Forum.
PUB DATE 96
NOTE 15p.; In: Academy of Human Resource Development (AHRD) Conference Proceedings (Minneapolis, MN, February 29-March 3, 1996); see CE 073 480.
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Viewpoints (Opinion/Position Papers, Essays, etc.) (120)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Adult Development; Adult Education; *Codes of Ethics; *Employer Employee Relationship; Employment Practices; Human Capital; *Human Resources; *Integrity; *Labor Force Development; On the Job Training; Organizational Development; Program Evaluation; Staff Development; Training Methods

ABSTRACT

These two papers were presented at a "town forum" on human resource development (HRD) moderated by Martin Mulder at the 1996 Academy of Human Resource Development Conference. "Human Resource Development with Integrity" (Ronald L. Jacobs) reflects on the conference theme and offers two definitions of integrity as applied to HRD. The second paper, "Performance with Integrity: Thoughts on a Code of Conduct for HRD that Reflects Adult Development Theory" (Victoria J. Marsick), suggests that a code of conduct for HRD practitioners be crafted, with emphasis on human development, using adult development theory to generate insights into a professional code of conduct that inculcates integrity. Papers contain references.

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ED 403 462

HRD TOWN FORUM

Chair: Martin Mulder, University of Twente

Human Resource Development with Integrity

Ronald L. Jacobs, Ohio State University

Performance with Integrity: Thoughts on a Code of Conduct for HRD that Reflects Adult Development Theory

Victoria J. Marsick, Columbia University

Academy of Human Resource Development
1996 Conference
Minneapolis, MN
February 29-March 3, 1996

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Human Resource Development with Integrity

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The conference theme of "Human Resource Development with Integrity" is both reassuring and challenging. It reassures us that the need to address issues related to professional ethics and values have not gone unnoticed. Doing research and practice in organizations is a difficult task. It challenges us in that integrity remains an abstract notion for many, ensuring that most people will use the term to suit their own needs. Two meanings of integrity as applied to HRD are discussed in this paper.

The theme of this conference is "Human Resource Development with Integrity." That integrity should be selected for the conference theme should not be surprising. So much discussion today involves this professional trait. We hear journalists say their integrity depends in part on reporting in an objective manner. Maintaining the sanctity of what is said between counselors and clients defines integrity for mental health professionals. The new breed of politicians warn voters that, if elected, they will do exactly what they promise. It seems counterintuitive to say that politicians should base their integrity on them actually keeping their promises. I have counted at least a dozen businesses in the Central Ohio area which use integrity in their names, from "Integrity Plumbing & Heating" to "Integrity Typing Services." The world, it seems, depends more and more on claims of integrity.

Integrity is now to be considered in regards to the field of human resource development. At first glance, such a discussion would seem relatively easy to carry out. Few would dispute that, along with professional ethics and values, integrity should be a part of HRD. Could anyone offer a credible argument to the contrary? Yet, after we have agreed on the importance of integrity, the following questions remain essentially unanswered: What is integrity? How does it differ from ethics and values? What role does it play in the work of HRD researchers and practitioners? This paper defines integrity in general and then discusses its two major meanings related to the HRD field. The paper concludes by discussing the challenges of pursuing the goal of integrity. Perhaps there are times when integrity and compassion need to be balanced. The major point here is that HRD with integrity, while an desirable professional ideal to pursue, remains a daunting personal challenge.

Definition of Integrity

From most standard dictionary accounts, integrity seems to have two major meanings. First, integrity denotes consistency in the way individuals carry out their beliefs. Second, integrity denotes the relative completeness of an object, thing, or process.

To say that a person has integrity suggests that he or she has considered the meaning of beliefs such as ethics and values, and then reacts to life situations, often under trying circumstances, in ways that are congruent with them. In this sense, integrity is not the same as, say, ethics, though the two concepts are obviously related. Ethics are the agreed upon set of rules that guide behavior, based on which principles to consider foremost (Flynn, 1995; Ferrell & Fraedrich, 1991). Ethics are necessarily prescriptive in nature. Ethics help us distinguish between right or wrong and good or evil. Integrity makes whatever ethical system adopted meaningful to the individual and a reality to others. Integrity presents the opportunity and the challenge to carry out the ethical beliefs.

The modern world continually challenges our ethics and, by extension, our integrity. Yet, while integrity can be associated with undesirable ethics, I believe this defeats the purpose of the

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intended meaning of the term. Simply stated, integrity without a sound ethical system has no social value. Morality and values play a fundamental role in determining how to conceptualize ethical behavior and, thus, how to possess integrity. Unfortunately, ethics, morality, and values all are relatively fluid constructs. Answers that we may believe are appropriate today are unlikely to remain so in the future. For instance, the Hippocractic Oath calls for physicians to pledge to do no harm. Yet, Hippocrates lived in a far simpler time, long before costly medical technology, co-payments, fee caps, and insurance deductibles were known to exist. Yet, the need for integrity to carry out our beliefs, whatever they may be, remains constant.

Instead of a personal trait, the second way of defining integrity denotes the particular status of some idea, object, or process. In this sense, integrity means that the idea, object, or process is judged to be complete, unimpaired, and whole in its most important respects. To say that something has integrity suggests that a judgment has been made, based on comparing it with a standard or referent. Integrity is said to exist when the instance is complete and not lacking in any major way.

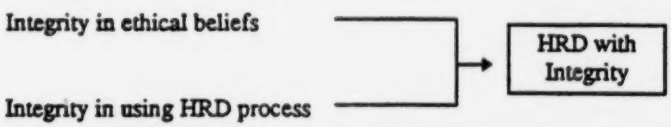
Many ideas, objects, or processes can be referred to as having integrity. For example, a research proposal can be said to have integrity when all critical aspects have been included, based on a list of considerations that make sense for all research proposals. Likewise, a boat is said to have integrity, when the wooden planks are attached to the extent that the hull does not leak. In each instance, the judgment is based on making a comparison, recognizing that the model or referent used to compare the example may differ across individuals. Would all sailors agree that even if a boat leaks some water, but not enough to endanger its occupants, then should it still be considered to have integrity?

HRD With Integrity

The conference theme of "HRD with Integrity" should reassure us that such topics are recognized as being important to the field. HRD is seldom as straightforward as some of our theories and practices might otherwise suggest. In truth, HRD exists within the untidy social context of differing individual motivations and perceptions of reality. Many issues in organizations can be right or wrong at the same time, depending on the person's point of view. Such a realization provides a necessary, if not humbling, background for this discussion on integrity. To say HRD with integrity, seems to mean that integrity exists alongside of, or in association with, HRD. Integrity is independent from HRD. But, integrity is something that should be considered along with whatever HRD activity is being done. Thus, the conference theme suggests that integrity is both independent from and, at the same time, a necessarily part of HRD.

I submit that HRD with integrity has two interrelated meanings: 1) Integrity in carrying out ethical HRD professional beliefs, and 2) Integrity in using the HRD process. As shown in Figure 1, together these two meanings form a comprehensive view of this concept.

Figure 1. Components of HRD with Integrity



Integrity in Ethical Beliefs. The first meaning of HRD with integrity refers to the consistency in which beliefs are adhered to, based on a set of professional ethics and values. This statement assumes that a set of professional beliefs exist in the first place. In 1988, Odin Westgaarde presented a "Credo of Performance Technologists," which included the following points that professionals should not do:

- Violate professional, academic, or business ethics by being less than honest in billing or by submitting low proposal bids and higher final bills;
- Promise solutions will work when the opposite may be true;
- Make false return on investment claims;
- Use client information for personal gain;
- Falsify data;
- Compromise the technology for any personal or political gain by providing interventions that are acceptable to the client but incorrect for the context;
- Take credit for the work of another; and,
- Make false claims about any professional's behavior or potential accomplishments.

Based on this information, Figure 2 presents a worksheet that connects sample dimensions of HRD research with professional ethics and key integrity situations. The dimensions identify some of the activities that may occur during HRD research, which are subject to ethical consideration. The ethical rule is presented next to the dimension, based on what the individual (in this case, me) believes to be the right or wrong thing to do. Finally, the key integrity situations are examples from experience that test the ethical rule. The key integrity situations present the occasion for using the rules. While the worksheet may seem overly simple it does address a major question related to HRD with integrity. How can professionals make HRD with integrity a more generative goal? HRD with integrity becomes a matter of recognizing instances that we encounter in our work, and then responding to them consistent with our beliefs.

Figure 2. Integrity in Ethical Beliefs Worksheet

	Ethical Rule	*Key Integrity Situations*
HRD Dimension		
A. Confidentiality of individual's responses	Individual's responses must <u>never</u> be revealed to the organization, unless permission has been granted to do so.	* Manager asks to see printout with names. * Manager asks about certain people.
B. Purpose of the research study	Purpose of research and use of data <u>must</u> be represented accurately.	* Researcher explains study to managers and employees, separately.
C. Publication of the results in journals	Publication of research results <u>must</u> be negotiated with client, even if name of organization is kept confidential.	* Client does not seem to want to be involved. * Organization name omitted -- what's the difference?
D. Ownership of the of data after study	Use of the data after the study <u>must</u> be negotiated with client.	* Graduate student asks to practice on data set for statistics class.

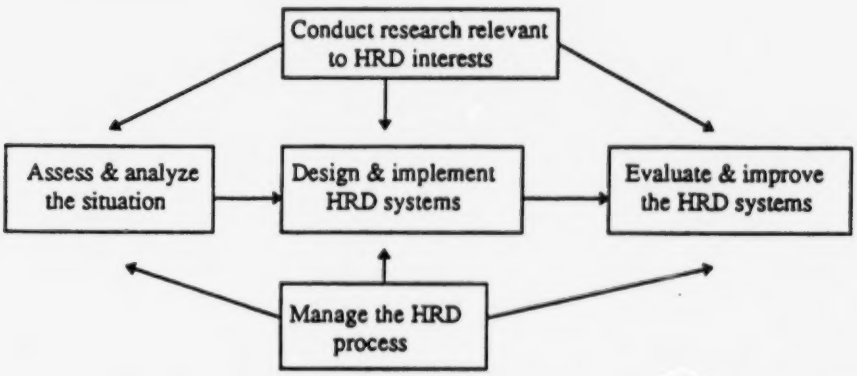
Completing the worksheet is a personal task and, thus, the information on it will likely differ for each of us. There may be disagreement on the dimensions of importance, perhaps the ethical beliefs about them, and the situations that give us opportunities to demonstrate integrity.

However, I suspect there is much agreement in terms of the HRD research dimensions than, say, the HRD practice dimensions.

Integrity in Using HRD Process. The second meaning of HRD with integrity is the completeness in using the HRD process. As presented in Figure 2, the HRD process is composed of the major phases of the systems approach, and the respective sub-processes within the phases (Jacobs, 1990). For instance, within the phase of "Assess and analyze the situation" are the sub-processes of strategic planning, needs assessment, performance analysis, work analysis, and so on. HRD with integrity is a judgment about the adequacy of our professional actions based on comparing what is actually done and what is called for in the HRD process. This meaning of integrity is relatively objective, since one can readily observe or reconstruct actual events to make the comparison and, thus, make a judgment.

The various HRD competency studies contribute much to this meaning of HRD with integrity. That is, the studies have identified the competencies required for the various HRD roles derived from the HRD process. Thus, if one possesses specific HRD competencies, then the person has the capability to carry out the HRD process which, in turn, is a measure of doing HRD with integrity .

Figure 3. Integrity in Using HRD Process


Conduct research relevant to HRD interests
Assess & analyze the situation
Design & implement HRD systems
Evaluate & improve the HRD systems
Manage the HRD process

This meaning of integrity relates to my own dual role as full-time HRD professor and part-time HRD practitioner. Integrity means that there should be consistency in what I believe is important for others to learn and what I do in my own practice. Integrity demands that theory and practice should be reconciled with each other. For instance, many of my graduate classes are infused with systems theory principles based on my writings on that topic (Jacobs, 1989). If I am to be a credible source of information, then I would certainly hope that my own practice in organizations clearly follows from this emphasis. If the performance analysis course requires students to analyze the organization, workflow, and job levels, then clearly I should be expected to do the same in my own work. Otherwise, whatever knowledge and skills I bring to students in the classroom would be diminished by my lack of integrity in using the HRD process.

Conclusion

Throughout this discussion integrity has been portrayed as a desirable HRD trait. Can we ever expect to achieve integrity? Probably not, since for most of us, achieving integrity remains an in-process goal. The challenges in doing HRD with integrity are no different from the challenges in being a good person. Sometimes we may succeed and sometimes, often in spite of our best intentions, we fail and result in disappointing ourselves and others. How to learn from

our experiences, without causing much damage along the way seems critical. Mark Twain said, "Good judgment comes from experience. And where does experience come from? Experience comes from bad judgment." It may follow that doing HRD with integrity means that we must experience the consequences of doing HRD without integrity first? Unfortunately, we learn by doing in an unstructured way.

Finally, in preparing this paper, I was struck by the notion that while we view integrity as desirable could too much integrity be undesirable? Consider that integrity to the extreme may lead to a loss of compassion for our human needs. Certainly to be compassionate requires some degree of flexibility, which by definition is the antithesis of integrity. Compassion says it is sometimes appropriate to relent on certain points because the psychological needs of others take precedence. I learned early in life that many rules are made to be broken. Fortunately, most of us are still struggling with the initial challenges of doing HRD with integrity. After all, who among us is truly able to maintain a workable system of personal ethics and possess the necessary competencies to engage in effective HRD research and practice? That combination seemingly represents an almost unattainable goal. Nevertheless, the challenge is to continue to pursue the goal of doing HRD with integrity.

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Performance with Integrity: Thoughts on a Code of Conduct for HRD that Reflects Adult Development Theory

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Discussions with HRD practitioners suggest that a professional code of conduct would help them in making decisions about integrity. But how should such a code of conduct be crafted? HRD's unique focus on people suggests that a code of conduct be influenced by what we know about human development. Adult development theory helps to generate insights into a professional code of conduct that speaks to integrity.

The coupling of "performance" with "integrity" as a theme of this conference implies, in some way, that the two concepts are congruent, or at least, they might be so. In what ways do HRD practitioners experience dilemmas in exercising their roles that might call into question their integrity? To write this paper, I asked this question of several practitioners. Although there are dramatic examples of lack of integrity in the field, these practitioners spoke more often to subtle challenges that show up in daily incidents. As I reflected on their answers, I could see that decisions about what constitutes integrity are often complex. As several practitioners pointed out, the profession itself does not offer any guidance to practitioners in making these judgments. I concluded that a professional code of conduct would be helpful. This led me to think about how such a code could be constructed. Everyone can agree to criteria that speak to "large" legal issues. Most professional codes of conduct provide absolute rules for making decisions that speak to such issues. However, HRD practitioners much more routinely face more subtle challenges tied to smaller daily decisions. These decisions are especially complex because HRD is centrally concerned with people's development. I concluded that a code of conduct for HRD should reflect this concern. I then turned to adult development theory for insights into how such a code should be constructed. These development theories offer a research-based perspective on the ways in which people at different developmental levels—both HRD practitioners and their clients—might make meaning of integrity, and therefore, on how a code of conduct might best be constructed.

In this paper, then, I first define integrity and raise several questions relevant to the difficulties people experience in understanding what integrity means. A professional code of conduct could help HRD practitioners by providing criteria for these judgments. I next turn to adult development theory—specifically frameworks developed by Kegan (1994) and Torbert (1991)—for help in understanding how people might think about the meaning of integrity. I develop criteria for integrity based on these theories, and use these criteria to analyze a range of challenges to integrity that were identified by HRD practitioners for this paper. I conclude with implications for developing a professional code of conduct.[1]

Definitions of Integrity

What does the dictionary say about the meaning of integrity? Random House (Flexner and Hauck, 1993, p 990) defines it as follows: "1. adherence to moral and ethical principles, soundness of moral character, honest. 2. the state of being whole, entire, or undiminished . . . 3. a sound, unimpaired, or perfect condition." The dictionary definition suggests three possible ways in which individuals, and the organizations in which they work, might define integrity:

1. Adherence to a code of conduct suggests congruence between external actions and internal espoused views about actions, either within individuals or within the organization.
2. Wholeness or organic unity suggests integration, that is, unity among the various components of beliefs for individuals or within the system.
3. A condition of soundness and/or perfection emphasizes the quality of wholeness articulated in a code of conduct, as articulated in either of the above definitions.

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Reflection on these definitions raises three questions about how people make meaning of integrity—their own, and that of others. First, do people have to pay conscious attention to a code of conduct in order to follow one? Second, how difficult is it to identify a code of conduct that another holds? Third, in what ways do societal beliefs influence the codes of conduct that individuals or organizations follow?

Regarding the first point, on the surface, it seems that people must have some conscious awareness about a code of conduct in order to follow one. How else can they rigorously assess the wholeness or idealness of conduct—their own, that of others, or that of the organization as a system.? Deeper consideration, however, leads to the realization that people can follow a code of conduct that they have uncritically adopted based on their admiration for influential others, or on what they were told about "right" and "wrong." Opinions about integrity are often acquired with little conscious thought through socialization in family units, peer groups, and other institutions (schools, religion, the workplace). People are unlikely to examine their codes of conduct unless they get feedback from others or from the environment that signals a conflict. Even if they feel uncomfortable with their actions or what is expected of them, they might not look further at what this discomfort implies.

As to the second question, there are difficulties in identifying the code of conduct to which others adhere. People evaluate others' actions based on their own values and beliefs, and may characterize those actions as lacking in integrity when those others do not conform to their own code of conduct. It is not always practical, when dealing with a workplace problem, to stop and ask how others might view integrity in that situation. Generally, people make judgments based on their own past experience and their perceptions of the other person, assume their judgments are correct, and act on these beliefs. The difficulties in not testing these assumptions are many. Error can simply arise because one's grasp of facts is incorrect.

The third question speaks to the way in which individuals and organizations construct their beliefs in interaction with societal judgments about integrity. Decisions about integrity made by one person affect others with whom one is bound in social and organizational life. The social construction of codes of conduct is made even more difficult today because the fabric of society is shifting in fundamental ways. Social codes need to be renegotiated in this new order. While real gains in democratic participation and pluralistic life have also introduced divergent opinions about what "ought to be," people are not necessarily skilled in surfacing, addressing, and reconciling these differences in views. Renegotiating social codes involves questioning basic assumptions, which may well lead to political struggles, for example, over issues such as the distribution and use of resources or power.

Implications for a Code of Conduct Answers to questions such as those posed above make it clear that judgments about integrity are complex: 1) People often follow codes of conduct that they have not consciously crafted or examined; 2) deciding what constitutes another person's code of conduct is difficult; and 3) a person may make arguments that could hold up under one person's test of integrity, but fall apart under another's. Some organizations have developed explicit codes of conduct, perhaps because of these difficulties. The profession of Human Resource Development does not have such a code. In its absence, professionals are left to make their own judgments about what constitutes integrity. I conclude that we ought to craft such a code. Moreover, I believe that the code should reflect the fact that HRD is centrally concerned with people, and hence, should do more than offer legal protection to adherents. Such a code should reflect what we know about human development. I thus turned to adult development theory for insight into the different ways in which people perceive their worlds, and consequently, the way in which they might differently define integrity. Finally, I develop criteria for making judgments about integrity based on these theories, and use these criteria to examine several dilemmas of integrity experienced by HRD practitioners.

Integrity as Viewed through the Lens of Adult Development Theory

There is no uniform theory of adult development. Here, I use work by Kegan (1994) and Torbert (1991) to look at the way in which adults might define and interpret integrity differently based on their level of development. I further focus only on those levels which their research suggests are likely to be relevant in today's workplace. Kegan, who bases his work on Piaget, argues that adults function primarily at what he calls a Stage Three or Stage Four Order of Consciousness.

Kegan describes Stage Three as Interpersonal Consciousness, which is characterized by mutual reciprocity, and is oriented to an internal, subjective state of self consciousness. Stage Four, described as Institutional Consciousness, is characterized by relationship-regulating forms, and is oriented to self authorship, autonomy, systems thinking, and individuation. Kegan illustrates the difference between Stage Three and Stage Four by contrasting attitudes at either level with respect to management challenges today. See Table 1. Kegan suggests that their way of making meaning at each of these stages is fundamental to understanding people: "Since what is most important for us to know in understanding another is not the other's experience but what the experience means to him or her, our first goal is to grasp the essence of how the other composes his or her private reality" (Kegan, 1982, p. 113).

Table 1: Kegan's Contrast between Stage Three and Stage Four Work-Related Attitudes

Stage Three Work-Related Attitudes	*Stage Four Work-Related Attitudes*
To "See" work "as owned and created by the employer"	*"To invent our own work"*
To be "dependent on others to frame the problems, initiate adjustments, or determine whether things are going acceptably well"	*"To be self-initiating, self-correcting, self-evaluating"*
To "be without a vision or be captive of the authority's agenda"	*"To be guided by our own visions at work"*
To "see our present internal circumstances and future external possibilities as caused by someone else"	*"To take responsibility for what happens to us at work externally and internally"*
To "have an apprenticing or imitating relationship to what we do"	*"To be accomplished masters of our particular work roles, jobs, or career"*
To "see the rest of the organization and its parts only from the perspective of our own part, from the 'inside out'"	*"To conceive of the organization from the 'outside in,' as a whole; to see our relation to the whole; to see the relation of the parts to the whole"*

Adapted from R. Kegan, In Over Our Heads, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994: 152-153 [italics added by Kegan].

Torbert (1991) derives a research-based understanding of the way in which managers think using the developmental framework of Loevinger (1976). See Table 2. Most managers place at one of three stages—which Torbert calls Diplomat, Technician, Achiever—and a few at a fourth stage, which he labels Strategist. Studies conducted by Torbert and his colleagues show that the behavior of 91% of their sample can be accounted for by one of these four stages. As is so for Kegan, Torbert notes that "Each succeeding construction 'dethrones' the assumptions of the previous construction and transforms them from their role of framing and governing reality to a new role as variables within a wider reality" (p. 42).

Table 2: Distribution of Managers by Stage in Studies Conducted by Torbert and Colleagues

Stage	Governing Frame	Percentage of Managers at Stage in Six Studies[2]
Diplomat	"Expectations rule interests"	8% of total
Technician	"Internal craft logic rules expectations"	45% of total
Achiever	"System success in environment rules craft logics"	36% of total
Strategist	"Principle rules system"	9% of total

Adapted from W. R. Torbert, The Power of Balance, Newbury Park, Ca: Sage, 1991: 43.

Developmental Criteria for Integrity Developmental theory raises questions about what integrity might mean to HRD practitioners. In Table 3, I suggest criteria for integrity at each of the developmental levels identified by Torbert. Torbert's four stages are related to Kegan's Third and Fourth Order of Consciousness (Harris, in progress). I use Torbert's definitions because he has provided more detail and clearer distinctions for each of his four stages.

Table 3: Suggested Criteria for Defining Integrity Based on W. R. Torbert

Torbert's Levels	Criteria for Integrity
Diplomat	What is most likely to obtain the approval of highly influential others
Technician	What is rational, logically consistent with craft rules, and efficient
Achiever	What is most effective for the system as a whole
Strategist	What is situationally appropriate, given the paradox and contradiction of life, and aligned with one's principles

The Diplomat takes sides with the person who, for whatever reasons, is perceived to be the most influential at the time "irrespective of the internal logic of those attractions, preferences, or viewpoints" (Torbert, 1991, p. 44). The meaning of integrity for the Diplomat can thus shift over time and, regarding the dictionary definition discussed above, does not necessarily represent wholeness or consistency of viewpoint.

In the face of conflicting viewpoints, the Technician "can develop a deep yearning (not necessarily ever expressed) to move from simply internalizing this conflict toward an internally consistent viewpoint that prioritizes actual claims" (Ibid, p. 45). The Technician is drawn to the intrinsic logic of her craft, to excellence, and to technical superiority. However, her code of conduct—though pinned to technical excellence—would still remain external to herself, in the hands of the expert.

The Achiever seeks his own standards, based on the logic of cause and effect and on goals which he has set and towards which he manages. The Achiever seeks the "right" answer—an answer that is based on logic. In so doing, he reconciles divergent views by using the logic of his clearly considered, data-driven standards. The Achiever shows "preeminent concern for overall system effectiveness in the environment" (Ibid, p. 46).

Torbert points out that people at the Diplomat, Technician, or Achiever levels do not question the value of the standards they hold. They manage well within the system to which they subscribe, but they do not have the capacity to stand outside this system and critique the values on which it is based. By contrast, at the next level—that of the Strategist—"a person ceases to take the existing overall structure of social systems for granted as appropriate (or at least inevitable) and therefore becomes interested in what a normative (a best, a just) structure would be" (Ibid, p. 51). Strategists call into question underlying goals, values, and structures. They feel "the need for a synthetic, post-objective theory that coordinates multiple realities" (Ibid, p. 52). The Strategist wishes to judge every situation within its own context and on its own merits.

The levels of adult development briefly examined above can help us better understand the multiple ways in which different Human Resource Developers might make judgments about whether or not behavior represents performance with integrity. In the next section of this paper, I illustrate this point by using the criteria in Table 3 to analyze several examples from practice.

Critical Incidents: What Integrity Means to HRD Practitioners

Challenges to integrity in HRD can be dramatic, as might occur when faced with public crises that speak to the company's code of ethics, when the potential exists for financial or other kinds of gain because of one's position or privileged information, or when bending or breaking rules enables the company to close a deal. Issues of integrity, however, can also be more subtle; they show up in smaller daily incidents as questions of professional judgment.

Several HRD managers with whom I spoke in preparing this paper,[3] for example, equated integrity with upholding standards despite pressure from others to the contrary. A specific example involved the lack of integrity of brokers, who are paid to offer professional judgment about the merits of various vendors, but who often take a neutral stance in order to please the customer and get their commission. Integrity was also described positively as the creation of a system to ensure fair play or access, such as one company's system of shared information for its vendors. The company encouraged honesty about boundaries, clarity as to what vendors could or could not do, and sharing of information without "stealing" it.

Several examples, all reported by one contact, highlight awareness of conflict between what the company asks of HRD professionals, and what HR professionals perceive their role to

be vis-a-vis the best interest of employees. One man working in a pharmaceutical company stated, "HRD is an oxymoron today. Performance today is all that counts. Get the job done without going to jail." His sentiments were echoed by two other women, one of whom commented that management held information back because she might "turn them in." She felt "torn between being 'management' and 'representing employees.'" Two additional women (who worked, respectively, in a brokerage firm and in a telecommunications company) commented that they felt their organizations did not show integrity when they avoided the retaining and developing of employees by using outsourcing, downsizing, and the easy replacement of one set employees by another in pursuit of the "right match of skills."

Beyond their explicit content, these examples serve in another way to illuminate the complexity of integrity issues facing HR practitioners. While they all speak to a concern for people, they also speak to a sense of helplessness and to difficulties in integrating and managing conflicting concerns. My contact speculated that these HR managers feared losing their own jobs. Their dilemma might be the double bind that if they did not follow orders, they would not do their jobs as defined, but if they did follow orders, they would not meet their own standards of performance. Multiple "goods" exist, and it is difficult to sort out competing concerns: the employee who is being "hurt," the HR professional's own welfare, potential impact on the morale of other employees, or the profitability and success of the organization.

In what way do the criteria associated with developmental levels help us to better understand issues of integrity? Two examples, described here in more depth, illustrate the way in which the criteria in Table 3 shed light on this question by examining differential responses to the meaning of integrity.

Leadership Training in Asia The first example comes from a male American HRD professional, whom I call Tony, who was conducting a six day leadership skills course in India for 45 entry-level management trainees from different parts of Asia. In the middle of the course, an Asian woman, whom I have named Lin, asked Tony if she and six colleagues from her office group could "skip" a day-long, hands-on module on presentation skills because Lin said that they had received training of this kind before, and that they had other work to do. Tony refused permission because the course was mandatory, their absence impacted on others, and he believed that they would benefit from more practice in presentation skills. Five of these seven people, including Lin, nonetheless did not show up until lunch. When they returned, Tony first confronted Lin, who "acknowledged she had no excuse, and that she knowingly and deliberately disobeyed" his instructions. Tony was angry, but tried to focus on his perception of the issues at hand. He talked to all five together. He asked them to apologize publicly to their group and to write him a letter of apology telling him what they had learned from this experience.

In this example, Tony spoke of several dilemmas that he experienced around integrity. If he said nothing, the trainees would think they could challenge the rules and do anything they wished without consequence, there or back on the job. Tony would also betray his own beliefs. Further, given the Asian culture, any "punishment" could cause those apologizing to "lose face"—e.g., holding them back from "graduation," reporting them to management, or publicly challenging them—and perhaps make it more difficult for them to further learn from their actions. If the trainer reported them to their managers, consequences could be especially severe, but if he did not, he might turn his back on potential long-range problems for the company.

Developmental Perspectives on the Case. Tony chose what he felt was the lesser of many "face threatening" evils, but nonetheless these trainees were publicly challenged, and hence expectedly were embarrassed in front of their peers. Using the criteria in Table 3, we can speculate on the integrity concerns that hypothetical observers at different developmental levels might express regarding this case.

The Diplomat's reaction to this situation would depend on her relationship to these people, and whom she perceived as the most influential figure. If she could identify with people in the case, she might agree with Tony's decision if she aligned herself with management, but feel highly distressed if she held one of the trainees in high regard.

By contrast, the Technician would honor the advice of an expert. His view would depend on the kind of expertise he valued. For example, he might hold in high regard the subject matter experts on leadership whose ideas guided the development of this course. Therefore, he might disagree with the Tony's judgment and insist that the trainees should not graduate under any circumstances until they could demonstrate mastery of the content of the lesson they missed..

From another perspective, the Achiever is concerned with what is appropriate for the

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system as a whole. She might disagree with the Tony's decision to refrain from notifying the managers to whom these trainees report. She would judge that their conduct signified deeper problems that would show up in other ways back on the job—a concern that Tony also expressed.

On the other hand, the Strategist might question the value of mandated training for its own sake. He might sympathize with the reasoning of those participants who felt that they had already taken presentation skills, and therefore, would find repeating this portion of the course a waste of time. In order to surface and learn from different views, he might engage the entire class in an inquiry into the legitimacy of claims and consequences. He could ask members what they would decide, given that the course's aim was to develop their capacity as leaders, and use the real-life dilemma as an opportunity for their own deeper learning.

Re-engineering a Systems Group A second example comes from an internal HR manager whom I will call Elizabeth. Her company was being re-engineered from top to bottom as a team-based organization. The change was triggered by conversion to a unified computer system. Everyone's job was to change; no position was guaranteed. A uniform selection process was put in place to match qualifications with job requirements. Each new job description was to specify required competencies in addition to other qualifications. The idea of competencies was not new, given that a competency-based employee development process had been put in place in the past year. In addition, Elizabeth was in the middle of developing a new computer-based 360-degree feedback system—that was also based on competencies and that would be used voluntarily by employees seeking information for their individual development.

The story unfolds in the systems group. It involves Elizabeth; one of her direct reports whom I will call Sally; Elizabeth's manager whom I will call Jim; and the HR Director, whom I will call Sue. At a meeting at which Elizabeth was absent, Sally and Jim decided to do a trial run of the 360-degree-feedback system, and to make these data available in the selection process. No one further consulted Elizabeth prior to sending a memo out to the group under Sue's name asking for these data. Elizabeth saw that employees might question the use of data that were not being collected and used elsewhere in the company to make selection decisions. In addition, the 360-degree feedback system was never set up to facilitate such decisions; its purpose was solely developmental. At the same time, Elizabeth wanted to maintain the credibility of Jim and Sue with employees. As a solution, Elizabeth advised that the data be collected, which meant that Sue did not have to publicly retract her decision, but suggested that the selection committee not rely on these data for making key selection decisions.

Table 4: Characters and Reporting Relationships in Re-engineering Case

Elizabeth	HR manager
Sally	Elizabeth's direct report
Jim	Elizabeth's manager
Sue	HR Director for entire group

Developmental Perspectives on the Case. Using the criteria in Table 3, we can again speculate on the integrity concerns that hypothetical observers at different developmental levels might express regarding this case. A Diplomat, in seeking to align with the opinion of the person whose influence most counted, might agree that Elizabeth acted with integrity if his main concern was protecting Sue's reputation. However, he might disagree with Elizabeth if he were most influenced by someone else with other standards for integrity.

A Technician, by contrast, in seeking the advice of an expert, might agree that Elizabeth acted with integrity for different reasons, primarily, that experts in HR processes support the idea of a uniform selection process. A Technician might also judge that Sally and Jim did not use good professional judgment by not acting in accord with this expertise.

The Achiever, on the other hand, would be concerned with the best systemic solution. He might argue that disgruntled employees could charge that the selection committee could easily be influenced by whatever data they had available even if officially considered "secondary." Integrity for him would be better served if Sue retracted her memo.

Let us assume that a Strategist held the view that maximum information was essential to the best personnel decisions—both for the candidate and the organization—and that equity in access procedures was secondary. She might question the need for a selection process that could not take into account additional data, if it were available, so that people could be best judged on their own merits even though, for many, fair treatment of employees would be synonymous with

following the company-wide rules for selection decisions. She might engage key representatives of the systems group in a collective decision about the added value of these data.

Implications for Performance with Integrity

What conclusions can we draw from development theory and from the examples discussed above? At the beginning of this paper, I argued that integrity is a social construct. My discussion of developmental levels underscores this point.[4] At the same time, my discussion also underscores the difficulty of constructing a code of conduct, should we wish to do so, that everyone would respect and implement.[5] Research by Torbert and Kegan on managers suggests that most HR practitioners are likely to be Diplomats, Technicians, and Achievers, and that a few will be Strategists. It is impossible to predict a Diplomat's judgments because he depends on influential others, but we know that Technicians will be guided by the consensus of experts, and that Achievers will agree with judgments that can stand up to the test of logic and rationality, given the goals set by a system. We can expect Strategists to seek a richer analysis of the context, and be guided ultimately by principles that enable them to step back and question the system if they think that it needs questioning.

Moreover, people at lower levels of development find it difficult to understand the reasoning of those at higher levels, and vice versa, unless a person has arrived, minimally, at the Strategist level, in which case she would be able to judge different perspectives in their own context. Torbert and Kegan argue that people at higher developmental levels can and should work toward expanding the thinking of people at lower levels. As professionals who are concerned with human development, I'm sure we would agree. However, I would separate this educational goal from the utilitarian goal of clarity that a code of conduct could provide.[6]

I conclude that a code could not be developed that would have uniform impact on people at every developmental level. Should we, then, abandon the idea of a code? Alternatively, we could design a code that would suit the judgment of: (1) People at a level that we believe is most appropriate for our profession and the workplace at this time in our history; (2) People at levels that represent the majority of practitioners; or (3) Some combination of people in categories (1) and (2). If we follow the first alternative, we would then have to make judgments about what that level ought to be, and we would have to engender commitment to strive in that direction. If we follow the second, we would reinforce the current level of thinking of the status quo, which would not develop capacity in the workforce to address future challenges. For example, Kegan and Torbert argue that modern life and organizational transformation demand the skills, minimally, of a Strategist.

I would recommend the third alternative, and suggest that a code be constructed that would enable Technicians and Achievers to follow a minimum set of core guidelines, but that would allow some leeway so that the Strategist could argue, case by case, that an alternative solution would be more appropriate in a given situation. Strategists need leeway, but if the code allowed for too much, every decision would be made by exception. Thus, the argument for a code—the clarity it can bring to decision making—would be weakened. I recommend a code that is constructed by experts, so as to appeal to Technicians, and that lays out a coherent logic that enhances the goals of the organization, so as to appeal to the Achiever. Diplomats might not get their needs met, but their reference point is idiosyncratic, and thus more difficult to address.

I make this recommendation knowing that it is not an easy one to follow. We are left with the question of how to construct such a code. It is not enough to simply accumulate wisdom from both practitioners and experts as to the kinds of dilemmas such a code should address, and the recommendations they might make for their resolution. Such systematic data collection would provide a comprehensive list of types of situations that could be addressed. However, conflicting viewpoints would also have to be reconciled. That cannot be done by majority vote; a panel of people need to think through the coherency and consistency of the code.[7] A code should contain clear statements about the values that influence principles that are generated to guide action so that people know the basis for the recommendation. The thinking that leads to each principle should be made explicit and, whenever applicable, experts whose judgments underlie the principle should be identified so that people can seek further information about the source for judgments. A series of questions should be generated to aid in thinking through the application of the code. Some of these questions might include: Who are the stakeholders in this situation,

and what perspectives (developmental or otherwise) might they hold? What factors need to be considered that bear on the solution? Which of the organization's values might be served by different solutions, and how do these values compare to one another if they conflict? What are the short-term and long-term impacts of various actions? What criteria should we use to reconcile competing demands?

Questions such as those just raised will help to surface differences in values that underlie decisions about integrity. Felkins, Chakiris and Chakiris (1993) suggest that ethics codes, which are related to integrity, though not perhaps synonymous, can be based largely on a virtue model, a social contract model, or a utilitarian model. All of these models fundamentally rest on the nature of the values being used to make judgments about what is "good." This is nowhere more apparent than in the utilitarian model, which seeks "the greatest good for the greatest number." In the utilitarian model, values must be clarified in order to reconcile conflicting viewpoints. Felkins et al argue that this model is especially appropriate to complex systems in which many different stakeholder perspectives are being taken into account. The utilitarian model seems to me to be most appropriate, as well, for developing a professional code of conduct for HRD. The challenge lies in developing a process that draws out differences and the thinking that underlies them, but that also does not leave resolution of differences to the most powerful voice present primarily because that person holds the most weight. A professional code of conduct that speaks to integrity must enable socially-constructed decisions to be made based on principles that everyone can understand, even if they might not individually be preferred.

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[1]My thanks to Christine Harris who critiqued these ideas in light of her own work (Harris, in progress), and to Peter Neaman—both of whom helped me to organize this paper.

[2]Samples include: 37 first-line supervisors, 100 nurses, 177 junior and middle managers, 66 senior managers, 104 executives, and 13 entrepreneurial professionals. Note that the remaining 2% of the sample fall into the "opportunist" stage preceding the "diplomat" stage.

[3] I asked five doctoral students to identify situations they face around integrity. One of these students also contacted six HR practitioners. One person also gave me his corporation's formal code of integrity, and training material used to orient all employees to this code.

[4]Other forces that bear on the social construction of judgments, but are not probed here, include differences that arise because of gender, race, class, or national culture.

[5]Even if a code were constructed, the profession is not recognized as an accrediting group and thus cannot enforce any sanctions if the code were broken. Also, the organization would likely hold sway if it disagreed with judgments of individuals or the profession.

[6]Judgments about integrity, moreover, typically have to be made on the spot. A code of conduct that requires a lengthy process of educational interpretation could not be easily used.

[7]In fact, strategies for facing, understanding, and reconciling conflicting views—and even, whether or not people are willing to take this on—also vary by developmental level.